United Nations E/CN.6/2005/NGO/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 January 2005

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-ninth session
28 February-11 March 2005
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": review of gender mainstreaming in entities of the United Nations system

Statement by Associated Country Women of the World, Centre for Women, the Earth, the Divine, European Union of Women, Hadassah — Women's Zionist Organization of America, International Council of Jewish Women, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of University Women, International Inner Wheel, National Council of German Women's Organizations, Pan Pacific and South-East Asia of Women's Association of Thailand, Salvation Army, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Socialist International Women, Society for International Development, Soroptimist International, Third World Movement against the Exploitation of Women, Women's International Zionist Organization, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and Zonta International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.6/2005/1.

05-22221 (E) 220205

Statement

We, the undersigned international and national non-governmental organisations in consultative status with ECOSOC, members of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Status of Women, present to the 49th session of CSW the following statement for information and consideration.

We welcome the entering into force of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime on 29 September 2003 and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, on 25 December 2003 and express our appreciation to those governments that have already signed and/or ratified these legally binding instruments.

We are deeply concerned about the atrocious practice of selling and buying human beings as objects and thus depriving them of their basic human rights. We are alarmed by the ongoing violent exploitation of women by transnational organised criminal groups that – with little risk – draw enormous profit from this crime.

We therefore appeal to governments

- to ratify and implement effectively the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking against Persons, especially Women and Children;
- to strengthen national, bilateral, regional and international multidisciplinary comprehensive cooperation at all necessary levels to combat trafficking in persons, the slavery of the 21st century, and tackle the root causes of this crime;
- to eliminate discriminatory legislation and gender-based customs and practices, which perpetuate the exploitation of women, their vulnerability for being trafficked and the use of violence against them;
- to place human rights at the core of anti-trafficking strategies and take a victim-centred approach;
- to initiate awareness-raising campaigns on the possible risks of trafficking in countries of origin, transit and destination by means of, inter alia, TV spots, leaflets, special teacher training etc;
- to train in particular personnel of embassies and consulates, sensitizing them to possible situations of trafficking in persons and addressing this problem adequately when issuing visas;
- to start awareness-raising campaigns in countries of destination to discourage the demand by men which leads to sexual exploitation of women and to promote changes in men's attitudes and behaviour;
- to include programmes and manuals on anti-trafficking policies in the regular training of law enforcement officers in order to prevent and detect cases of trafficking, to carry out effective investigation and improve the proper treatment of victims of trafficking by respecting internationally recognised human rights standards;
- to provide continuous training for prosecutors, judges and criminal justice personnel on the complex crime of trafficking in persons, as well as on the rights of the victims of trafficking;

- to support effective and speedy cooperation between police, prosecutors, border control, immigration and judicial authorities, social and public health workers and relevant NGOs, making use of the latter's expertise;
- to review current laws, administrative controls and conditions relating to the licensing and operation of businesses that may serve as covers for trafficking, such as marriage bureaus, employment agencies, hotels and escort services;
- to create victim and witness protection programmes on national and regional levels;
- to establish an international fund for supporting victims of transnational organised crime with specific projects for women victims of trafficking, using the confiscated proceeds of crime for that purpose.